



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

LAZARUS DE VITERBO'S EPISTLE TO CARDINAL
SIRLETO CONCERNING THE INTEGRITY OF
THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE.

THE history of the "humanistic" movement among the Jews of Italy has yet to be written. Though the knowledge of Latin possessed by Jews in other countries was not as low as is generally considered to be the case, we have still to note that it was owing to the culture of Italy, and specially to the influence of the humanists, that the knowledge of Latin literature first spread among the Jews. We have evidence of this not alone in the translation of several pieces of ancient classical literature into Hebrew, but also in the employment of Latin for purposes of scientific expression.

But with the language were introduced into the tents of Jacob also the scientific spirit, the comparative study and appreciation of the national literature, æsthetics and criticism. It is by no accident that the founder of modern Jewish science, Azarya di Rossi, came from Italy.

The following small contribution to the history of Jewish *belles-lettres* in Italy I now submit as an instance on the philological side of a Latin treatise by a Jew, the subject-matter serving as an example from the Jewish point of view of a modern scientific diatribe. I am indebted to the kindness of Prof. Dr. Walter Friedensburg and the Royal Prussian Historical Institute in Rome for having given me the opportunity of rescuing it from concealment among the archives of the Vatican and bringing it to the light of day.

Lazarus de Viterbo acts as the defender of his co-religionists before his patron, the learned Cardinal

Gulielmo Sirleto, inasmuch as he repels the absurd reproach, that the Jews had falsified those portions of the text of Holy Writ which seemed to contain proofs of the truth of Christianity.

The charge was not a new one; it was ever raised against the Jews afresh without intermission, in spite of hundredfold refutations, by both Mohammedans and Christians alike. In Rome, the accusation that the Jews had, out of hatred of the Christians, tampered with the text of their sacred records, was first again levelled at the Jews in 1555 with terrible fury by the fanatic Franciscus Torenensis, in his work: *De sola lectione legis et prophetarum Judæis cum Mosaico ritu, et cultu permittenda*.

It did not suffice him that the towns of Italy were smoking with the stakes upon which the Talmud was burnt at the bidding of the Pope and his Inquisitors; he would fain have sacrificed at the same time the entire Jewish writings, the commentators of Holy Writ who had escaped death by fire. The Inquisition had already arrogated to itself the right to watch the printing of Jewish books; the text of Jewish books had to a certain extent to receive its impress from Rome; all that was wanting to complete the matter was that it be prescribed to the Jews how the text of Holy Writ had to be read—that text which they had saved out of the storms of ages, the purity of which they had guarded as never any other work had been guarded.

It was not by accident that Cardinal Sirleto was the man before whom the question as to the integrity of the Hebrew text was to be heard.

Not only his study of the Hebrew language, evidenced by his *Adnotationes in Psalmos* in the Antwerp Polyglot of 1569, but also his official position, rendered this question one of deep interest to him. Cardinal from the 12th March, 1565, Protector and Judge of all Catechumens and Neophytes from the end of 1567, the Oracle of the Tridentine Council, which he advised from Rome with the

fulness of his world-wide scholarship—it was Sirleto's task to occupy himself uninterruptedly with Jewish questions social and literary, so much so that according to Dejob's investigations¹ his papers remain even for the present time a valuable source of information, and an unearthed treasure for modern Jewish history. Filled rather with the spirit of Marcello Cervini, afterwards Pope Marcello II., whose memory is blessed in Jewish history² in spite of the short duration of his office as Pope—filled rather with his spirit than with that of the dark intolerance of Pope Paul IV., Sirleto possessed the kindness and forbearance to lend an ear to reasonable arguments, though they came from the Jewish side. It was his special knowledge of the subject that made Hebrew as dear to him as the classical languages.

Lazarus de Viterbo is on this account confident at the outset of finding in this influential Cardinal an advocate of his righteous cause. He proceeds from the view that the Holy language, the instrument of the world's creation and of Revelation, also produced the crown of all literatures, namely the Bible. With liberal and cultured mind and critical eye, Lazarus praises the fervour of the Psalms, the flights of Isaiah and the inimitable sweetness and tenderness of the Song of Songs.

How could the Jews, the depositaries of these treasures, have dared to lay hands upon such sacred possessions, seeing that their entire history is a proof that they believed with all confidence that they possessed in these writings God's own word. For what else, he adds with clever irony, than this conviction could have kept them steadfast in their faith, unless it was the fortune and peace, the protection and security of which they could boast in the profession of that faith?

Nay, a glance at the condition of these documents as now extant proves with how great a fidelity and

¹ *Revue des Études Juives*, IX., 77, sq.

² Kaufmann, *ib.*, IV., 88, sq.

devotion they guarded the integrity of their texts. For unless it had been so, how would it have been possible that, despite their dispersion over the earth and all the vicissitudes of their career, such a uniformity could have existed in the text of the Sacred Scriptures, that the Bible of an Italian Jew differs in no wise from one found in the other countries of the inhabited globe !

That which was accomplished by straining all the powers of industry and memory till the time of Ezra, in whom, in spite of Elias Levita, our author with rash faith sees the founder of the system of Hebrew vocalisation and accentuation, this marvellous coincidence in the tradition and reading of the sacred texts, this was the work, after Ezra, of the Massora. On the alert for every characteristic of the text, it established out of affectionate consideration, by counting every striking grammatical and orthographical peculiarity, a fence round about the Sacred Scriptures which guarded them against the intrusion of errors and corruptions. Looking at the Massora alone, which has been able to accomplish the most marvellous results by means of the labours, incomparable as they are in point of devotion and self-sacrifice, of those responsible for the counting and classification of verses, words, and even letters, one would have thought that the mere idea would have been silenced and not suffered to be expressed, that a people which had demonstrated to the world such marvellous industry and self-denial could have wilfully and wickedly tampered with the text of these records. But the very examples which are brought forward to substantiate the charge, show on closer investigation that they are without foundation, for internal evidence as well as the older translations bear testimony to the truth of Jewish tradition. And though the audacious charge was proclaimed even from the pulpits of Rome, possibly by Jewish converts of the type of Andrea de Monti,¹ and appeared before the tribunal of the judge on

¹ *Revue*, IX., 87, *sq.*

scientific and learned questions—a position which in the opinion of Lazarus de Viterbo Cardinal Sirleto held at the time—yet the accusation that the Jews had altered the text of the Old Testament had to fall to the ground.

Lazarus de Viterbo is not unknown in the history of Jewish literature. He is the one who as Eliezer Mazliach b. Abraham Cohen, published about the year 1585 at Venice, through Juan di Gara, his Italian translation of Moses Riste's ethical poems ¹מעון השואלים under the title: *I tempio di oratori*. It is in the familiar reflective style of the Hebrew; names of places which occur frequently are reproduced in Hebrew or Aramaic equivalents, as *e.g.*, Posen is rendered פו נאה, Cracow כרכא, and he gives Viterbo the origin of the family name, as בי תרבא, to remind one of the Talmudic בי תרבו (*Joma*, 77 *a*; *Baba K.*, 23 *b*).

There is no necessity for us to conjecture that Isaac b. Abraham Cohen de Viterbo, whose acquaintance we make as Rabbi of Siena in 1573, was his brother, for David de Pomis clearly tells us so in the Introduction to his Lexicon Zemach David. He mentions the fact with pride that through his wife, whom he lost early in life, he became the brother-in-law of these excellent brothers, Eliezer, the learned and pre-eminent physician, and Isaac, a renowned authority, both as Talmudist and philosopher.²

When Joseph of Foligno was about to marry, in 1573, at Pesaro, Julia, the widow of his brother David who had died without issue, and who at the same time was the sister of his deceased wife, Sulpicia—when, in other words, he wished to avail himself of the right of marrying his deceased brother's wife, and he obtained the sanction of all the important Rabbis of Italy, we find that R. Isaac b. Abraham Cohen de Viterbo of Siena was among those who

¹ Cf. Dukes in *Orient*, IV., 486, n. 30.

² אשת נעורי שהיתה אחות של אנשי חסד ואמונה היושבים ראשונה במלכות הדעת והתבונה כמהר"ר אליעזר חכם ורופא מובהק וכמהר"ר יצחק אחיו הגאון והפילוסוף הגדול שניהם ראשי הגדולה ממלכת כהנים אשר יצאו מויטורבו :

were foremost in giving their opinion in favour of the permission.¹ If I rightly understand the words in which Isaac cites a similar case which occurred in his youth, it would seem that Rome was the native place of these two brothers, and that in that city permission was given by the Rabbinate to a man named Ephraim, who was equally anxious to avail himself of the law of the Levirate.

Besides being renowned for their Rabbinic scholarship, these two brothers were famous in the medical profession. Isaac, whom his brother-in-law David de Pomis (himself distinguished as physician and lexicographer) does not style as such, is yet called in his decision upon the question regarding the Levirate, not only Gaon, but also President of the Physicians, while Eliezer is singled out by David himself as a renowned physician. It is not unlikely that, on this account, he stood in the relation of physician in ordinary to Cardinal Sirleto, and that it was this close relationship to the Prince of the Church that impelled him to write his Epistle concerning the integrity of the text of the Hebrew Bible.

DAVID KAUFMANN.

LAZARUS OF VITERBO'S LETTER TO CARDINAL
SIRLETO.

(*Rome : Vat. Arch. Var. Pol.* 47, *fol.* 101^b.)

Ill^{mo} et R^{mo} D^{no} S. R. E. Cardinali Sirleto domino meo
osservandissimo.

Inter eximias præclarasque animi tui dotes R^{me} ac Ill^{me} Presul
ac virtutes prope divinas, quibus cæteris omnibus tuæ ætatis
hominibus antecelles, veritatis, amor, maxime in te relucet, cum
apertam unam dumtaxat aurem dicenti inclines, alteram vero clausam
contradicens apertam serves, adeo quod inclinatio tua ad utramque
partem semper equalis permanet, cum ergo multi arbitrantur hebreos
ipsos ut Christianorum intentiones aufugerent sacras scripturas
pluribus in locis depravasse proptereaque ajunt, illis correctione

¹ פחד יצחק, III. 24c. Carmoly, *Histoire des médecins Juifs*, p. 153, and
Mortara, מזכרת חכמי איטאליא, p. 69.

opus esse, cum hoc semper ægre passus sim an hoc sit verum nec ne, enitar paucis. D. T. Ill^{mae} demonstrare, que tanquam iudex non iniquus, æqua lancia vel eosdem nefando crimine accusabis, vel sacris canonibus favebis eosdemque a calumniatoribus defendes, reliquum est ut D[eum] O[ptimum] M[aximum] deprecet ut Te tanquam ornamentum atque ætatis nostræ decus, incolumem et superstitem conservet et ad vota exaltet.

D. T. Ill^{mae} atque R^{mae}

Humillimus servus

Lazarus hebreus Viterbiensis.

fol. 102^a—108^a.

Non sine optima ratione Ill^{mae} et R^{mae} D^{nae}, linguam hebream ab omnibus dici linguam sanctitatis, cum ille gloriosus Deus sanctissimus, non dedignatus est, cum hominibus se ipsum communicare, et hac lingua alloqui, cum qua etiam ipsum universum creavit, ut ostendunt, ac demonstrant derivationes nominum nostrorum primorum parentum, et omnium qui ante linguarum confusionem vixerunt, cum Adam ab Adama, hoc est a terra, derivetur, ut affirmat textus dum dicit.¹ Et formavit Deus hominem e pulvere terræ; et paulo inferius:² et misit eum Dominus Deus de horto delitii ad colendam terram ex qua sumptus fuerat. Ipse etiam Adam, dixit in primo intuitu mulieris³ Ischia ab Isc, hoc est mulier, a viro, dicendo huic vocabitur mulier quia ex viro sumpta est, eamque proprio nomine hava, a Cai, idest a vivente, dicit enim textus,⁴ et vocavit Adam nomen uxoris sui ava quia ipsa fuit mater omnis viventis, ipsa etiam dixit⁵ Cain, a verbo acquiro, et Sced,⁶ a verbo pono. Lemec etiam vaticinando derivavit Noac a verbo consolor, dum dixit,⁷ et vocavit nomen eius Noac dicendo iste consolabitur nos ab opere nostro et a dolore manuumstrarum et Heber (a quo dicti sunt hebrei) vaticinando etiam ipse dixit.⁸ Peleg a verbo divido, quia in diebus eius divisa est terra. Lecus etiam confusionis linguarum dictus fuit Babel,⁹ a verbo confundo, quia ibi confundit Deus labium omnis terræ. Que derivationes omnes in alia quacunque lingua, (hebreæ excepta) minime derivari sive deduci possunt. Quamquidem linguam cum nomen duxit ab Heber Noe pronepote. Liquide probatur remansisse in linea, et successione sanctorum patriarcharum unde pater ipse Abraam, ex illis primus. Licet patrie esset Caldeus, Caldaicoque

¹ Gen. ii. 7.

² Ib. iii. 23,

³ Ib. ii. 23. Comp. Mendelssohn's Introduction to his Translation of the Pentateuch.

⁴ Ib. iii. 20.

⁵ Ib. iv. 1.

⁶ Ib. iv. 25.

⁷ Ib. v. 29.

⁸ Ib. x. 25.

⁹ Ib. xi. 9.

idiomate (quod non multum ab hebreo distat) pro vernacula, et materna lingua usus fuerat, hebream tamen pro sibi propriam retinuit. Unde Abram Hebreus¹ sed non Caldeus a patria sua dictus fuit. Unde liquide colligi potest hoc sanctissimum Idioma, omnibus suis successoribus tanquam hereditarium relictum fuisse, ut etiam derivationes nominum filiorum nepotum ac omnium tribuum demonstrant ut inspicienti apparere potest.

Additur etiam ad hoc, quod quando ille summus Legislator, sibi ipsi complacuit ut populo suo dilecto de sua sanctissima lege gratificaretur, non Ægyptiaco, non Greco, sive alio quovis idiomate, illam legem interpretatus est, sed solum musaica lingua, qua tot, tantaque sanctissima prophetica verba, tot tantique sanctissimi Davidis psalmi, ac denique universa sacra historia, exposita sunt, cui certe tanquam omnium perfectissime nec copia, nec ornamentum unquam defecit. Licet hodie anxietate populi sui diminuta reperiatur, fuit tamen alias plena et integerrima, ut ostendit tractatus ille tabernaculi divi Moysi, ac templi Regis Salomonis quibus nec instrumentorum, nec materierum, nec lapidum nec preciosarum gemmarum nomina de quibus opus fuerat defecerunt, sicut in aliis occasionebus animalium, volucrum plantarumque nomina, ut aliarum rerum de quibus non fuit occasio indigebant,² sic tunc temporis minime desiderabantur, nam quando poma illa colloquintide in ollam Elisei fuerunt apposita statim nomen illorum pomorum inventum fuit. Ait enim et invenit vitem agrestem et collegit ex ea Pacuhod,³ hoc est coloquintidos.

Quod autem attinet ad eius ornamentum, certe hoc mirabile ac stupendum existit. Sed ne quid dicam de eiusdem lingue subtilitatibus, dicam tantum quod minime satis exploratum est mihi, que oratio gravior, nec quod eroicum poema, secum deferat altius ornamentum, sive suaviorem dulcedinem quam Sacrosancti Davidis psalmi, unde merito a sancto spiritu dictus fuit,⁴ dulcis carminibus Israel. Hec qualis copia maior nec doctior eloquentia, sive maiestate ac varietate gravior, que vel superet, vel quidem pari passu ambulet cum oratione divinissimi vatis Iesae. Unde ipse furore solito prophetico gloriando aiebat.⁵ Dominus Deus dedit mihi linguam eruditorum ut sciam dicere tempore suo sitibundo verbum. In aliis enim oratoribus maior dicendi facundia minime invenitur, nec

¹ Gen. xiv. 13.

² The author used here certainly Jehuda Halewi's arguments for the wealth of the holy language in his *Cusari*, ii. 68; see Cassel's remarks in his second edition of this work, p. 169, n. 3, and Kaufmann, *Jehuda Halewi*, p. 28, n. 3.

³ 2 Reg. iv. 39.

⁴ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

⁵ Jes. l. 4.

alius quidem fuit acrior vel acerbior in reprehensione, nec dulcior atque suavior in consolatione nec efficacior in proferendo, ommitto magnum pelagum ornamenti et copie aliorum ne tedio sim legenti.

Si sic est ergo quod sanctissimo sanctorum placuit hoc idiomate alloqui, si hac orbem ipsum creavit, si hoc sanctis patribus in confusione linguarum, et successive tanquam hereditarium populo dilecto remansit, hac exposita ac tractata sunt omnia sancta, lex sancta, sancta vaticinia omnia, ac sancti Davidis psalmi ac universa sancta historia, iure quidem optimo linguam sanctitatis dici ac ab omnibus sic (discrepante nemine) recipi necesse est.

Sed si hec sanctitatis dicta est, quia sanctas scripturas omnes exposuit tanto magis ille sanctissime reputari debent, dicitur enim propter quod unum quodque et illud magis nam si præceptorem amamus propter discipulum, discipulum ergo magis amamus.

Quale ergo delictum aut facinus gravius vel atrocius excogitari sive imaginari poterimus, quod acerbiori pœna sive supplicio feriori, dignius reputaretur quam illius qui mala mente excogitaret, vel in malo animo conaretur maculare sive corrumpere (animæ suæ pernitæ, totiusque orbis detrimento) minimum quidam de illis sacrosanctis canonibus, opus summi Dei gloriosi, quod toti universo pro sua universali perpetuaque salute, gratificatus est, nescio quidem excogitare quod sacrilegium magis impium quod Deo maximo magis displicere posset?

Immo facile credo, quod Deus ipse gloriosus, pro sua maxima charitate et summa pietate, suum opus versus, nunquam permetteret tale scelus suum consequi finem sicut etiam firmiter teneo, quod mirifice actum sit (habita ratione tantarum aerumnarum et calamitatum per tot discrimina rerum que musæicus populus passus est), illos sanctissimos canones in suo candore et perfectione permansisse.

Sed quoniam nunquam defecerunt ut nunc non deficient; qui hebreos antiquos vel modernos aperte oppugando calumniantur asserentes ipsos hebreos depravasse et lacerasse scripturas sacras, ideo dicunt et affirmant dictis sacris literis opus esse correctione cum semper hoc egre tuli cum mea quidem sententia, sit alienum, et minime rationi consentaneum, omni conatu [...] evitare vivis rationibus demonstrare. Tuæ Ill^{mae} ac R^{mae} Dominationi (cui semper veritas fuit amica) quod hoc sit impossibile sed potius manifestissima calumnia pace ac venia aliter credentium.

Et primo dicimus presupponendum esse quod ipsi hebrei vel credunt (prout firmiter certe tenent) eorum leges et canones esse divinum opus, eis a Deo optimo maximo pro eorum æterna salute gratificatum, vel aliter credunt et tenent, quod sint tantum opus ab

hominibus excogitatum et fabricatum. Sitenent illos divinos esse, secum eorum salutem deferentes, quorsum ego maxima suarum animarum iactura proprias leges corrumpere voluerunt? hoc esset potius diabolicum non humanum opus.

Sed si aliter tenent et credunt, quorsum sic pertinaciter per tot secula in errore sibi notissimo permansissent? forsane ne propter quamplurimas felicitates, plurimasque divitias, magnosque honores, regna et status, quibus sub hoc cœlo maxime gaudent? que cum deserere et derelinquere non patiantur perseverant in hac vita mundana adeo felici quod propter ipsam altera perennis minime ipsis cordi est?

An hoc verum sit nec ne, tanquam manifestissimum aliorum iudicio relinquo. Secundo dico quod licet Hebrei hoc facere voluissent numquam fuisset sibi integrum, propter eorum dissipationem, dispersionemque, nam et si universus hebreorum cœtus simul unico loco convenissent adhuc longe eis difficillimum umaniter [*l. unanimiter*] convenisse ut proprias leges corrupissent sæpissime enim magna copia discrepat in sententia.

Sed si hebrei per universum orbem dispersi sunt, nec quidem historia vetusta vel nova legitur, quod ipsi hebrei ab annis 1540 aliquando convenissent quomodo ergo itali iudei, galli, hispani, alemani, greci, africani, et tandem qui trans Eufratem habitant. Indiani etiam et Ethiopes poterant in unam sententiam convenire, ut unum vel duo, vel tria vel centum loca sacræ paginæ alterarent, seu mutarent? Ego firmiter teneo minime unquam integrum esse cuivis maximo Imperatori etiam totius mundi Monarche eum consensum suum sortiri effectum, tanto minus hoc possunt ipsi hebrei qui eorum delicto vel infortunio, ubique locorum opprimuntur, nec unquam aliquis inter ipsos defuisset, qui toti cœlo hoc notum fecisset, tamen textus scripturarum Italorum maxime conveniunt (sine aliqua minima discrepantia) cum aliis cuiusvis regionis etiam remotissimæ sive quantumvis occultæ.¹

Hec autem (mea quidem sententia) adeo efficax apparet, ut sola sit sufficiens veritatem huius facti luce clariorem demonstrare.

Sed ut omnino calumniantium omnium os claudatur, ex dicendis

¹ It is the same argument derived from the harmony and unanimity of all the manuscripts of the sacred rolls in the Jewish communities from the frontiers of India to the border of Spain, which we find already in the Spanish-Arabic literature against the assertions of Islam, that the Jews have changed and falsified the texts of their holy books. Comp. Abraham Ibn Daûd *Emuna rama*, ed. Weil, p. 80, and Maimûni's letter to Yemen in קובץ תשובות הרמב"ם, II. 36, and in Holuh's edition of Ibn Tibbon's translation of this Letter. p. 28.

toti cœlo manifestissime demonstrabitur. An hebreorum intentio fuit unquam tueri, defendereque sacras scripturas vel easdem corrumpere vel devastare.

Sed imprimis sciendum esse censeo, quod secundum opinionem doctiorum hebreorum doctorum, ante ætatem Esræ hebrei in scripturis minime unquam usi fuere, nec accentibus nec punctis, quibus hodie pro vocalibus utuntur [,] sed loco vocalium tribus literis utebantur scilicet literis ׀¹ que literarum matres a nostris grammaticis dicuntur: nam Alef pro A; Vau pro o vel u; Iod vero pro I vel E officio fungebantur. Sed non ubicunque fuerat opus ipsius a, ponebant ׀ alef, nec ubi erat opus v, vel o, ponebant ׀ vau, quemadmodum loco i vel e, scribebatur ׀ Iod [,] sed tantum opponebantur ubi maior urgebat necessitas, alia vero loca omittebant Juditio peritæque legentis qui usu et experientia a suo unusquisque preceptore doctus sine errore absque litteris vocalibus scripturas legebat, adeo quod principalissimus Moyses profetarum omnium, legis lator, interpretæque divini oraculi, docuit modum recte legendi (ut isti aiunt) totam hebreorum turbam et imprimis Jesuen eius successorem ac universum eiusdem gymnasium, istique successive alios profetas et illi alios usquam ad babilonicam transmigrationem, adeo quod professi perseverantibus usquam ad hoc tempus, sacra pagina inculpabiliter incorruptaque semper permansit.

Sed in universali babillonica hebreorum perniciæ atque ruina, deficientibus sanctis hominibus facile pati potera(n)t, sacra scriptura iacturam non minimam, nisi etiam profetæ ipsi, eorumque successio perseverassent usque ad secundi templi ædificationem, ut fuerunt Zaccarias, Ageus at alii, inter quos fuit Esra diligentissimus scriba sacræ legis ut plenam fidem de ipso reddit textus dum ait,¹ ipse Esra ascendit e Babel et erat scriba velox in lege Moysi quam dedit Dominus Deus Israel.

Cum autem cognovisset ipse Esra quanta iactura in plebe iam facta ac quanta poterat fieri in dies etiam in viris patritiis, voluit viam et modum invenire ut unicuique liceret, sacram paginam sine errore perlegere, atque incorrupta omnino conservaretur.² Unde ultra quamplurima volumina que propria manu scripta reliquit, de quibus aliqua hodie etiam vivunt ipse Esra cum sua magna academia, in qua aderant imprimis: Necamias, Zaccarias, Ageus, Malachias, Zerubabel, Jesus maximus sacerdos et alii probi viri usque ad numerum 120, adinvenit puncta pro vocalibus, et accentus non sine

¹ Esra vii. 6.

² For the history of that opinion see G. Schnedermann, *Die Controverse des Ludovicus Capellus mit den Buxtorfen über das Alter der hebräischen Punctuation*, Leipzig, 1878, p. 25.

maxima consideratione et altis misteriis, ut facile eligitur ex illo textu dum ait,¹ et legerunt in libro in Lege Dei expositi, et positus est intellectus et intellexerunt scripturam, unde veteres nostri expositores² intelligunt ex dictis verbis, inventionem punctorum, vocalium et accentuum ac pausas sententiarum, ac alia altiora, et aliqui ex dictis intellexerunt³ etiam מְסֻרָה hoc est librum traditionis de quo inferius, fuerunt etiam qui dicentes huiusmodi puncta, et accentus traditos fuisse a divino oraculo ipsi Moysi, ut reliquam scripturam non tamen in scriptis, sed tamen oretenus,⁴ ut etiam oretenus aiunt expositio legis universe tradita fuit ab Esra deinde et sua magna academia fuerunt omnia sic disposita ut hodie ordinata sunt. Sed quia hæc opinio aliqua instantia patitur aliqui sibi assentiri noluerunt, sed cum lingua hebreæ et sacra scriptura tot minutiis, tot punctis, totque accentibus, repleta sit cognovit illa magna accademia ac Esra⁵ eiusdem primus, quam facile evenire posset propter mundana accidentia ut in aliqua particula depravaretur, excogitarunt modum invenire ut quavis occasione integerrima conservaretur, vel si hoc acciderit, facile ad pristinam integritatem et claritatem reduci valeret, et sic incepterunt illi boni viri componere monumentum quoddam, quod ex eo quia ab uno ad alterum tradendum erat מְסֻרָה,⁶ hoc est traditionem vocabant in quo scripta reliquerunt omnia signa, omnesque regulas, quibus sacra pagina in sua sinceritate et candore custodiretur.⁷ At quoniam error cadere poterat in illis

¹ Neh. viii. 8.

² Nedarim f. 37^b.

³ Ib., ואמרו לה אלון המסורות. Comp. Jehuda Halewi, *Cusari*, iii. 31: במסורות ואחר כן במסורות. My manuscript of Jehuda Ibn Tibbon's translation of the *Cusari* reads : ואחר כן במסורת, but see for our reading : במסורות Steinschneider, *Catalog der Berliner hebräischen Handschriften*, p. 77.

⁴ For this opinion comp. Jehuda Halewi *Cusari*, iii. 31, and the expositions of Buxtorf (the son) in his *Tractatus de punctorum origine*, p. 312 et seq. (Schnedermann, l. c., p. 22 n. 7).

⁵ Comp. Profiat Duran Efodi in his grammar מעשה אפר and Schnedermann, p. 25.

⁶ For the form מְסֻרָה see Bacher in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, III. 785, and Edward König, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, (Bonn, 1893) pp. 38, 39. The pronunciation of מְסֻרָה, which we find there in our text, is also mentioned by Buxtorf.

⁷ Our author seems as if he had not yet any knowledge of the post-talmudical date which Elia Levita assigned to the Hebrew vowels and accents in the first and third introduction of his *Massoreth Hammassoreth*, though this book had already been issued many years before this memoir has been written, the editio princeps dating from 1538. Comp. Isidore Harris in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, I. 228-230. But his silence

dictionibus que nunc in unum, nunc in alium modum scribi solent, modo cum una ex dictis matribus modo sine illa, modo cum uno ex dictis punctis seu vocalibus modo cum altero, incepit illa magna academia in his rebus extrema diligentia uti, quequidem academia per multo^s annorum centinarios in his elaborando perduravit, adeo quod hæc diligentia eo usque pervenit, quod, ne in numero versuum eorum caperetur, numerum versuum totius sacræ scripturæ supputaverunt, at ne talis error cadere in dictionibus valeret, eius dictiones omnes numeraverunt, sed ne in litteris hic error accidere posset, etiam literas, et characteres omnes per numeros collegerunt, et tanto ulterius progressus est hic labor, quoad invenerunt versiculum illum octavi Levitici qui dicit et posuit super eum pectorale, esse totius pentateuci versuum medietatem,¹ alium vero in decimo eiusdem qui dicit, querendo quesivit Moyses, esse eiusdem pentateuci dictio-num medietatem querendo ex uno, quesivit ex altero latere.² In-venerunt etiam litteram Vau illius dictionis כָּרוֹן, hoc est omne ambulans super pectus³ esse medietatem literarum eiusdem.⁴

Nec propria illi viri[z] fuit satisfactum, nisi etiam numerassent versus, dictiones ac literas singulorum capitulorum, ne uni auferretur et daretur alteri, ponendo pro signo infallibili unius cuiusque numeri nomen alicuius viri ut gratia exempli primum capitulum genesis quod ab hebreis dicitur Berescid invenerunt habere versus 146 et pro signo istius numeri posuerunt כִּפְצֵיָהּ nomen illius regis, nam calculus literarum illius nominis ad numerum 146 ascendit.

Nam sciendum est, omnes hebreorum litteras in tres ordines divisas esse et unamquamque ipsarum numerum aliquem significare.

Primus ordo est unitatum ab alef prima litera que unum significat usque ad ted nonam literam, que novem resultat.

2^{us} ordo est denariorum a litera Iod que X. refert usque ad zadi que 90, importat.

Tertius vero est centinariorum a cof que centum dicit usque ad zadi finalem, que noningentenus numerus est. Alef vero que in

cannot be an argument for the assertion that Lazarus of Viterbo did not yet know Elias's book; he used it in other places, but he ignored his view on these points designedly.

¹ Lev. viii. 7. Comp. Joel Müller, *Masecheth Soferim*, c. IX. Hal. 3; pp. 134, 135.

² Lev. x. 16, according to the expression of the Massora דָּרַשׁ מִכָּא דָּרַשׁ מִכָּא. Müller, *ib.*, and Isidore Harris in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, I. 139, n. 5.

³ Lev. xi. 42.

⁴ Kidduschin f. 30^a.

primo ordine, unitatem referebat, in ultimo tota ditio mille significat.¹

Atque ne additamentum vel defectus posset (ut dictum est) accidere in caratheribus vel litteris alterius capituli ad aliud numerarunt etiam literas singulorum capitulorum adeo quod invenerunt literas dicti primi capitis esse 1915 et pro signo huius numeri ponebant טו טז que litere ad illum numerum ascendunt, adeo quod dictum primum caput duo signa retinuit alterum versuum, alterum vero literarum. Secundi capituli dicti Noac, habentis 153, versus signum fuit נצלתל nomen illius boni viri, cuius literæ eundem numerum referunt, et sic de singulis factum fuit.²

Nec ardenti desiderio illorum satis fuit factum, quoniam numeraverunt etiam versus omnes singulorum librorum ipsius pentateuci, ne ab uno libro ad alterum error committeretur, inveneruntque numerum versuum primi libri quem dicunt Genesis esse 1634 [l. 1534] talis numeri signum fuit אל דל cuius medietas invenerunt esse versum illum super gladio tuo vives³ at quia hic liber habuit 12 magna capitula, signum fuit אהאב nomen illius Regis eiusdem capitula minora fuerunt 43. Signum eorum fuit ידיריה nomen Regis Salomonis. Literæ omnes ipsius Genesis fuerunt 4395, et sic de singulis. Versus omnes totius pentateuci fuerunt 5045 [l. 5845] omnes autem eius literæ fuerunt 60045.

Nec etiam illi boni viri in hoc acquieverunt, quoniam numeraverunt etiam singulas literas totius sacri voluminis, inveneruntque alef 42377. Bed 38218. Ghimel 29637 [l. 29537] et sic de singulis literis fuit calculatum, quarum numerum, ne tedio sim legenti, libenter omitto.⁴

¹ Comp. the third introduction to Elia Levita's Massoreth Ha-Massoreth וחקל השלישי חלק המאיו' והוא קרשתך מן פ' ו' ולמנין אלף חזור [=tota dictio] הדין לראש האלפא ביתא וכותבין אלף במלואה

² From a comparison between this digression and Elia Levita's words, l. c., it will be clear, that Lazarus of Viterbo used already his Massoreth Ha-Massoreth, and that he did not share his opinion about the date of accents and vowels when he pronounces a different view.

³ Gen. xxvii. 40.

⁴ The poem from which these dates are derived, is assigned in some manuscripts and by Shemtob Ibn Gaon in his ברי הארון to Saadja Gaon (see Dukes, נחל קדומים, p. 2), and has several times been edited. Different numbers are communicated by Shapira in the "Athenæum" No. 2626 (1878, Febr. 23). R. Jaïr Bacharach f. 272* doubts already the correctness of these numbers: כאלו רוח ה' דבר בו יי אבל מה נעשה והחוש מכחיש

Nec hucusque videntes huius desiderii relaxati fuerunt donec altera exquisitissima diligentia uterentur, nam cum quamplurime dictiones hebreæ sint que aliquando scribantur cum aliqua ex tribus matribus literarum, quam dictionem tunc plenam vocant, aliquando vero eademmet dictio sine illa litera scribatur, quam dictionem tunc temporis mancā appellant, ut gratia exempli futura prime coniugationis modo scribuntur cum vau in ultima ut **אֶפְקֹד**, **נִפְקֹד**, **תִּפְקֹד**, **יִפְקֹד**, modo sine ipsa ut **פִּקֹּד**, **נִפְקֹד**, **אֶפְקֹד**, et sic fere de infinitis aliis dictionibus dicendum est.

Isti vero ne error accidat in scribendo plenam pro mancā, et mancā pro plena, numeraverunt ex ipsis, eas ditiones que in minori sunt numero, sin enim plene sunt in minori numero numerant plenas, si vero in maiori numero, numerant mancās, adeo quod que pauciores sunt, semper numerantur, assignando loca et signa ponendo ut **קָדוֹשׁ** idest sanctus scribitur cum Vau in ultima et dictio est plena, sed numerantur in toto sacro canone 13 vicibus inveniri mancā sine dicta litera Vau in ultima ut **קָדֵשׁ** sic etiam **אֶרֶן** idest arca dicunt tribus vicibus inveniri mancā, et sic de singulis assignando loca et capitula et signa ponendo.¹

Quod autem dictum est de Vau dicitur etiam de Iod ut **נְשִׂיָּאִים**, hoc est patriarchæ invenerunt dictionem hanc quater in ultima tantum plenā,² et quater plenissimā puta in ultima et penultima sic etiam numerando dicunt de hac dictione **נְבִיאִים** hoc est profete et sic de singulis.

Eademmet considerationem habuerunt de alef nam inveniuntur quamplurime dictiones plene de alef et aliquando inveniuntur eadem sine dicta alef sic etiam de he que in ultimo dictionis venire solet dicendum est nam aliquando plene aliquando manche inveniuntur ut **רִשִׁית**, **רִשִׁית**,³ **נֶעַר**, **נֶעֱרָה** et sic de singulis.

Nec solum plenitudinem vel defectum dictionum numerantur sed etiam mutationes vocalium, nam cum hebrei habeant pro qualibet vocali duo puncta ut loco A. habent hanc virgulam sub litera videlicet que padacidicitur, et virgulam cum puncto videlicet — que dicitur camez quarum una longa altera vero brevis est. Si ergo dictiones ille que regulariter punctari deberent padac punctarentur

פרטי המספרים. Since Josef del Medigo, **נובלות חכמה**, ed. Basel, 1629, II. 196, the poem is assigned to Saadia b. Josef Bechor Schor, see Zunz, *Zur Geschichte*, p. 75.

¹ Comp. Elia Levita *l. c.*, c. II.

² Ib. c. 5; cf. *The Massorah*, ed. Ginsburg, II. 290.

³ Cf. *The Massorah*, II. 272.

camez vel e contra, numerant etiam et assignant illas dictiones que irregulariter punctantur, ut etiam numerant et assignant dictiones quarum accentus regulariter esse deberet in ultima et irregulariter erit in penultima vel contra.

Sic etiam assignant et numerant subtilitates et minuties multo minores.

Preterea usi sunt etiam alia extrema diligentia in numerando quasdam sententias que sepe numero uno modo, et sepenumero in alio modo inveniuntur, ut causa exempli hec que dicit ה' [אלהי] ישראל hoc est Deus Deus Israel et aliquando dicit יה' צבאות אלהי ישראל hoc est Deus exercituum Deus Israel sic etiam hec alia sententia que dicit יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' hoc est benedicat tibi Deus et aliquando dicit יְבָרְכֶךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ hoc est benedicat tibi Deus Deus tuus quia hæ sententiæ et similes in utroque modo sepe inveniuntur ne accidat error de una ad aliam numerant sententias ne mutarentur et assignant loca et capitula.

Numerant etiam omnes dictiones in quibus loco Iod ponitur Vau vel e contra ut nihil intactum relictum sit.

Dantur etiam quedam particule replicate et triplicate et quadruplicate quarum alique describuntur cum copula et alique sine ipsa ut אֵת אֵת אֵת et has etiam numerant et assignant ut distincte inotescat que cum copula et que sine ipsa scribi debent et sic de similibus ab illis observatum fuit.

Si huiusmodi labores et observantie in aliis libris quam in sacris fuissent observate pueret me certe tot minuties enumerasse, sed in sacris nunquam fuit satis superque observatum quam magis non deberet observari.

Nec censendum est casu et fortuna huiuscemodi dictiones aliquando plenas aliquando mancas accidisse, ut fortasse multi arbitrari poterant cum propter eam superabundantiam vel defectum literarum sensus sive significatum dictionis nequaquam varietur, sacra enim scriptura cum perfecta sit tanquam divinum opus nec superflua nec diminuta esse poterat sed necessario sic vel sic describi debent, sed in his rebus fundantur profundissima mysteria ac sacra archana Theologiæ cum doctores ipsi unicuique minutie reddant rationem.

Unde ex omnibus dictis nullus unquam locus calumniæ relinquitur ac luce clarius poterit unusquisque cognoscere, an antiqui hebrei habuerunt in animo depravare scripturas an easdem integer-

¹ Cf. *The Massora*, II, 567.

² Cf. *The Massorah*, I, 710.

³ *Ochlah W'ochlah*, ed. S. Frensdorff, N. 79, 230-1.

rimas conservare etsi hodierni vel novi licet voluissent si hoc facere potuissent.

Unde meo quidem iudicio ille divus Thomas de Aquino rationi consentaneum dixit, hebreos esse scripturarum sacrarum armarium.

His non obstantibus multi arbitrantur ac etiam diebus paucis elapsis cum quidam bonus vir concitatus est publice dixit hebreos ipsos depravasse versiculum Ieremie dicentis cap. 23,¹ et hoc est nomen suum quod vocabit eum Deus iustus noster dixit enim ille quod loco יְהוָה hoc est vocabit eum debet legi יְהוֹשֻׁעַ hoc est vocabunt inferendo quod hebrei ut aufugerent ne messias vocaretur Deus iustus noster corruperunt textum et loco יְהוָה hoc est vocabunt adaptarunt ut legatur יְהוֹשֻׁעַ hoc est vocabit eum quasi dicat quod Deus iustus noster vocabit eum messiam etc., sed cum in utraque lectura idem sensus habeatur quod hebreis attribuitur manifestissima est calumnia, nam legant Christiani vocabunt, legant hebrei vocabit eum, semper nomen ipsius messie, erit Deus Deus iustus noster. Nam secundum Christianorum lecturam que dicit vocabunt, sensus est quod Israel sive Juda sive omnes gentes vocabunt messiam Deus iustus noster, secundum vero hebreorum lecturam que dicit vocabit eum, idem est sensus, nam dicit textus in diebus suis salvabitur Juda, et Israel habitabit confidenter, et hoc est nomen eius quod vocabit eum Deus iustus noster, quod ad Judam vel ad Israel vel ad totum universum refertur. Scilicet quod unusquisque eorum vocabit nomen messie Deus iustus noster, adeo quod in utraque lectura semper messias vocabitur iustus noster, aliter hebreorum lectura imperfecta esset, si vocabit eum referretur ad Deum iustum nostrum, qui vocaret nomen messie, cum nullum aliud nomen, quo Messias vocaretur referat textus ille.

Nec apud hebreos hoc est inconveniens, cum Idem Hieremias cap. 33, dicat in diebus illis salvabitur Juda et Hierusalem habitabit confidenter et hoc est quod vocabit eum Deus iustus noster adeo quod ex his verbis apparet quod etiam civitas ipsa Hierusalem vocabitur Deus iustus noster et Ezachiel dixit ultimo capitulo et nomen civitatis ex hodie Deus ibidem.²

Et Moyses dixit ad altare יְהוָה, hoc est Deus elevatio mea³ idem dixit Jacob ad altare Deus Deus Israel.⁴

Et paraphrasis caldea, et illi antiquissimi viri qui librum illum traditionis inceperunt, legunt vocabit eum, et non vocabunt, adeo quod nulla relinquitur ratio nec autoritas hebreos hunc locum depravasse.

¹ Jer. xxiii. 6.

² Ezech. xlviii. 35.

³ Exod. xvii. 15.

⁴ Gen. xxxiii. 20.

Dixit etiam ille bonus vir hebreos etiam corrupisse illum¹ textum psalmi 22, et loco נָרַי, hoc est foderunt secundum Christianorum lecturam legunt ipsi hebrei כְּנָרַי, hoc est sicut leo.²

Certum est quod parum refert ad hebreos qualis sit hæc lectura sed si ipsi hebraei scripturas corrumpere voluissent, ut aufugerent Christianorum intentiones, quid fuit in causa quod reliquerunt intactum capitulum 52 Isaie in quo Christiani fundant omnem intentionem? quare etiam intactum reliquerunt textum illum Zaccariæ in cap. 12, et aspiciunt ad me quem confixerunt? ³ quare etiam in libro illo dicto traditio parva⁴ reliquerunt כְּנָרַי בְּהָרִי לְעֵנִי, hoc est sicut leo bis inveniri in sacris in duo significato? et quare reliquerunt, in libro dicto traditio magna⁵ כְּנָרַי ד' ב' קְמוּצִין וְב' פִּתְחִין hoc est sicut leo quater, inveniri bis cum caf punctata padac et bis cum caf punctata camez? ne Christianis relinqueretur anza fundandi suas intentiones.

Sed quod etiam hoc sit calumnia, liquide demonstrat antiquissima parafrasis Caldea nam cum vidisset secundum lecturam hebreorum sententiam diminutam sive imperfectam, adlidit verbum נִכְתִּין hoc est nacti(m)[n] quod mordentes seu ferientes significat quasi dicat congregatio malignantium circumdavit me mordentes sicut leo manus meas et pedes meos adeo quod hoc modo etiam Christiani possunt habere suam intentionem, lega iquisque ut placuerit.

Unde ille R. P. D. Augustinus Iustinianus Episcopus Nebiensis in scoliis sui psalterii quinque linguarum⁶ in hoc passu dixit sicut leo manus meæ et pedes mei, sive manus meas et pedes meos constructio defectiva subaudiendumque impii tanquam leo foderunt perforaverunt male habuerunt fixerunt aut male tractaverunt etc., nec assensio dicentibus hebreos hunc locum corrupisse quod ex nostris arbitrantur multi qui dicunt legendum esse apud hebreos carū deducta voce a verbo carā quod fodio sive figo sive vincio significat et verum quod hic verborum structus defectivus habeatur, liquide ex caldeo textu qui defectui occurrens addidit verbum Nactin quod mordentes sive vulnerantes seu ferientes significat hec ille.

¹ Cf. Franciscus Torrensis, *De sola lectione legis*. . . . *Judæis* permittenda, p. 27.

² Cf. Graetz, *Kritischer Commentar zu den Psalmen*, I. p. 228.

³ Zach. xii. 10.

⁴ מְסוּרָה קְטָנָה.

⁵ מְסוּרָה גְּדוּלָּה.

⁶ Augustinus Giustinianus, bishop of Nebbio in Corsica, author of the *Psalterium Nebiense* (Genua 1517); comp. Perles, die in einer Münchener Handschrift aufgefundene erste lateinische Uebersetzung des Maimoniden "Führers," p. 3 sq.

Unde apparet homines probos qui veritatem diligunt sine suo preiudicio vel detrimento iusto tantum accommodatos esse.

Hæc pauca, R^{me} et Ill^{me} D. Dominationi tuæ volui dixisse ut si vera esse censeas reprimas, reprehendasque audaces qui contra etiam sacros canones absque ulla ratione os aperiunt postergata ratione tante sanctitatis atque operis summi Dei gloriosi, qui charitate sua atque clementia conservet exaltetque ad vota Dominationem tuam Ill^{mam} et R^{mam} cui humiliter genuflexus me ipsum et omnia mea commendo.
